

nothing more.¹ Why Disraeli
 should have taken
 so much trouble to preserve the
 anonymity of the
 book, or whether he had any more solid
 reasons than a
 native love of mystery and a desire to follow
 the fashion
 which Scott had established and to which
 lesser lights
 like Plumer Ward had conformed, we
 cannot be sure;
 but the publisher was so far from disliking
 the mystery
 thus created that he skilfully availed
 himself of it for
 purposes of his own. A master of the art of
 advertising,
 Colburn controlled, or was in a position
 to influence,
 several of the best-known organs of
 literary opinion;
 and presently in the daily journals and in
 weekly and
 monthly periodicals hints began to
 be given of the
 approaching appearance of a new society
 novel by an
 author who for obvious reasons
 desired to remain
 anonymous and in whose pages all the
 leading people
 of the day were to appear under thin
 disguises. The
 book was to be 'extremely satirical,' and was
 to contain
 'portraits of living characters, sufficient
 to constitute
 a National Gallery'; it was to be 'a sort
 of Don Juan
 in prose,' and the hero was 'to become
 acquainted with
 every literary and fashionable character
 in existence.*
 By arts such as these curiosity
 was aroused and
 expectation created, and when towards the
 end of April
Vivian Grey appeared in two octavo volumes
 its success
 was at once assured. Long reviews were
 published in
 many of the leading newspapers and
 periodicals; society
 amused itself by endeavouring to identify
 the originals
 of the characters; and at the same time

speculation,
diligently fomented by the ingenious
Colburn, raged as
to the identity of the author. From their
different points
of view both publisher and author had every
reason to be
satisfied with the success they had
achieved.

Though we may safely assume that Disraeli
was not averse from the prospect of notoriety,
there is nothing to show that he had any real
responsibility for the puffing

¹ Layard, I, p. 46.